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## DOMENICI'S MELROSE RANGE TRANSFER BILL CONSIDERED BY SUBCOMMITTEE

### Senator's Bill Would Transfer Authority for Roosevelt County Range

WASHINGTON -- Representing a key move in his effort to simplify management over the Melrose Air Force Range in east central New Mexico, Senator Pete Domenici today reported that a Senate subcommittee has received testimony on his legislation to transfer authority over the Roosevelt County range to the Department of Defense.

Domenici serves on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management that today held a hearing on his **Melrose Range Transfer Act** (S.2757). The Melrose Range legislation would transfer administrative jurisdiction over the range property, parts of which are now managed by the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to the Secretary of the Air Force.

Col. Jeffrey Remington, the new commander of Cannon Air Force Base at Clovis, accompanied Jimmy Dishner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, who testified on behalf of the Domenici bill.

"I am pleased that the subcommittee is moving forward on this legislation, which is needed to simplify management at the facility by giving the Air Force Control over land uses on the range," Domenici said. "This should serve to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their range operations and natural resource management."

Melrose Air Force Range in Roosevelt County is comprised of six parcels of public land, totaling about 6,714 acres, of which 1,118 acres are utilized as a bomb impact zone. The remainder is required as a safety buffer. The affected lands are multiple parcels of public domain lands within a large block of Military Service acquired real property.

The BLM has held lands within the range since 1970 after acquiring them through an exchange with the state of New Mexico, which had leased the Air Force the property since the range was created in 1957.

"This range stands to serve an important training function for the military for years to come, underscoring the need to streamline management and minimize safety concerns. I look forward to getting this bill through Congress this year," Domenici said.

The full Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will next consider the bill.